

THE
OMEN

VOLUME 38 ISSUE 4

VOLUME 38, ISSUE 4:
MARCH 15, 2012

Table of Contents

SPEAK: SAYRES PETITION :: THE DAY OF
ATONEMENT BUT ONLY FOR SOME :: SCHERZO ::
THE IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL
LIES: HONEY IN THE LION :: JONATHAN GARD-
NER ACCORDING TO GOOGLE IMAGE RESULTS ::
LADLE RAT ROTTEN HUT :: HOROSCOPES
HATE: RE: JONATHAN GARDNER :: RESPONSE
TO "INTENT AND CULPABILITY" :: STOP COM-
PARING RAPE TO MURDER

Staff

Fiona Stewart-Taylor
Penumbra
Stephen Morton
Baked Potatoes
Jonathan "Omen Kid" Gardner
Fun with economics
Rachel Ithen
Tommy Pickles
Ian McEwen
Sweatery as fuck
Breton Handy
I have no idea.

Allison McCarthy
Eat a Salad
Sky Reid-Mills
Where am I?
Ben Batchelder
Aunt Ben & Uncle Jemimah
Margaret McGrew
Charles
Devin Morse
Spray Tan

Front Cover, Back Cover, and Doodles by
Ben Batchelder

Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: **we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous.** Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. **The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it.** Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. **Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views.** (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an honestly pretty adequate monitor, nowadays. You should come. We don't bite. **You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in the Dining Commons, the post office, or on the door of your mod** (if we get to putting it on doors, anyway).

TO SUBMIT

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu or Rachel Ithen, Box 1413.

Editorial:

Editorial for Readers

This editorial is dedicated to all of you, our dear readers.

To the people who open each issue only to scan the pages for familiar terms that would incite drama, excitedly anticipating our next controversy.

To the folks of Mod 29, because I know you read them... I see them floating around the common area every other week.

To the various people who have told me they like reading my editorials.

To the rest of the Omen staff, those who submit things weekly, to those who show up to layout for the food and the fun.

To David Axel Kurtz, because I have a feeling that somewhere, someday, you will read this.

To the food places we order from for our Thursday night layouts every other week, to the ones we have to call back five minutes after our initial phone call once we remember to ask for an itemized receipt.

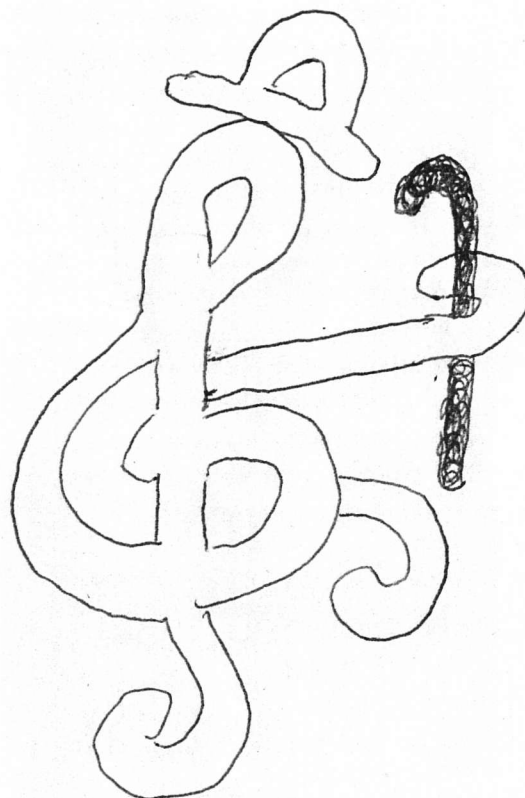
To the folks who only pick up a copy when they find themselves next to a pile of new issues the day they decide to go pick up their mail, to those who open the front page and stand in place in the post office, reading aloud an intriguing submission to their friend who is much slower at turning the dial of their box.

To duplications, who has stuck with us through thick and thin (literally), who has put up with our huge Valentines Issues and then lovingly pokes fun at our 16-or-fewer-pagers.

To Marie Johnson, who helped us discover that even having too much money in our account is usually a bad thing.

To the man who vacuums the library at 3 in the morning, who eats his dinner among the library stacks, who always has a smile on his face and is perpetually willing to strike up a conversation with you, whether it's on the Giants winning the Super Bowl or the final paper you're writing on Charles Dickens.

Thank you, dear readers. This one's for you. <3



THE OMEN HAIKU

views in the Omen

*do not necessarily
reflect the staff's views*

Section: Speak

Sayres Petition

submitted by Alexander Dymovsky

Dear Prospective Students and families,

I am compelled to write to you about a recent matter on Hampshire's campus. As students beginning to think of whether or not to accept the offer made to you, I believe it is in your best interest to do so with full knowledge of the internal dynamics of the institution you will likely spend four years learning at but also with whom you will be working with.

Beginning in October 2011, a national search began for an assistant professor of Middle East Studies for Hampshire College. One internal candidate, Sayres Rudy, made it to the final round with three external candidates. Sayres Rudy is a Visiting Assistant Professor in Politics who had previously taught at such notable schools as Harvard, Amherst, and Columbia. He has 18 advisees, was teaching four classes this semester, and finishing his PhD at Columbia University. He has traveled extensively, given 63 lectures within the Five Colleges alone, is incredibly well-published, and has received incredible academic distinctions at each institution.

A group of concerned students received word today that he was not hired for this position and instead an offer was made to another candidate. While many students and some junior faculty members who spoke anonymously voiced concerns over this process, the decision was made still to offer the position to the other candidate regardless of the fact that in comparison, Sayres is grossly overqualified. This is not the first instance where Hampshire's faculty has acted in a way which silenced students' voices but in many ways went forward with a process behind closed doors which was not transparent to all community members.

As a student invested in this campus, I ask that you consider very carefully your options for higher education. I have attached links to two notes that I posted on my Facebook dutifully detailing the accusations against Hampshire College. If you are interested in a radical institution that provides academic and intellectual rigor, want to learn in a place which does not allow internal personal politics to affect people's profession, and a school which actually embodies excellency -- think twice about Hampshire College & take this seriously.

[2]<http://www.facebook.com/notes/christopher-clark/hampshire-college-assistant-professor-in-middle-east-studies/1015069364356063>"

Thoughts? 

The Day of Atonement *But Only for Some*

by Ben Batchelder

The two films, the *Jazz Singer* (1927) and the *Cantor's Son* (1937) are so similar that it's tempting to call them companion pieces. Both films are musicals, essentially vehicles for the careers of their stars, Al Jolson and Moyshe Oisher, respectively. They have virtually the same plot: a young singing prodigy must abandon his Jewish roots to find his fortune in the world of modern show business, and somehow return to the call of tradition. But the two films have very different endings. While the *Cantor's Son's* Shoimele abandons his frivolous American lifestyle in favor of a happy quiet shtetl life, the *Jazz Singer's* Jakie is never made to choose between his American and Jewish lives to find happiness. The central conflict of the film is never resolved. Ultimately, for me, this makes the *Jazz Singer*, despite its technical innovation and mass cultural appeal, unrealistic and totally unsatisfying.

The music is the main point I wish to discuss in this essay. To begin, let's examine how the two characters make their mark in the world of show business. In the *Cantor's Son* Shoimele sings nostalgic songs about his hometown of Belz, revealing his homesickness and attachment to his home. Once he gains popularity he refuses to abandon this cherished heritage and submit to European-style music. He still feels the sting of his father's admonishment and this constantly guides him back toward Jewish music.

So for his big radio debut, instead of singing an upbeat Italian opera song, he covers his head and sings "Av HaRachamim," a mournful prayer imploring mercy for the dead Jewish souls. As he sings, Jews around the nation pause to appreciate the sincerity of his plea. Shoimele is singing from the heart and this is what gives the performance its beauty. It is particularly significant that the prayer is addressed not to "Adonai," "God," but to "av," or "father." Shoimele is in reality addressing his own father as he sings, "Father of mercy... remember with compassion the pious, upright and blameless... who laid down their lives... to carry out the will of their

maker." He is hoping to redeem himself in the eyes of his father by singing this Hebrew prayer and not some secular escapism.

Speaking of which, in the *Jazz Singer*, Jakie's show stopping opener, "Dirty Hands, Dirty Face," was, I think, chosen more to reveal the dazzling power of synchronized video and song, matching Al Jolson's melodramatic, gushy singing with his exaggerated, showy gestures. The same can be said of his following number, "Toot Toot Tootsie (Goodbye)," for which he gives what is arguably the most lively and enthusiastic performance of film history. On their own they are wonderful performances but they are lacking in this element of sincerity which the *Cantor's Son* gives us right off the bat. Jakie has no beloved son or lost lover; these songs don't relate to his character but serve as mere plot devices, a setting for Jakie to be discovered and begin his rise to stardom.

In both stories, the main character's relationship with his parents carries a significant parallel to his relationship with his Judaism, and after finding success in America, both characters return to their parents to show them their new, mature voices, and express their true feelings through song. In the *Jazz Singer* this song is the film's biggest redemption, its most powerful moment, the scene that made its way onto all the posters. Jakie's mother, like any good Jewish mother, has been dying of heartbreak since her son left her to find success in the big scary world, and Jakie eases her worries by singing her "Blue Skies," an optimistic and poignant tune promising a brighter future for their fragmented family. But his father walks in the room just as he begins to jazz it up and kicks him out of the house.

This is something the *Cantor's Son* lacks. The equivalent song is the first one of the movie, the delightfully self-referential "Welcome to Our Show." This too results in the main character's exile from the home, but only indirectly. No song ever really leads to Shoimele's father's disapproval, and by the time he comes back to Belz to serenade his parents ("Goldene Khosene"), his father has completely forgiven him (he sent him \$25, which is apparently all it takes to buy a father's respect). In this way much of the dramatic tension has been sacrificed in favor of a happy reunion, which comes too far from the end of the film to make a thoroughly satisfying denouement.

At the end of the original story by Sampson Rafaelson, Jakie sings Kol Nidre in place of his father who has died of grief after his son abandoned his Jewish identity. The act of taking his place purifies him of his sin of betraying his community, and although his career is still intact and might possibly come to thrive after the story is done, it is clear that he is choosing his religion over his career, and this choice has even unlocked his full vocal potential. The congregation affirms that this is the best performance they have ever heard. The satisfying conclusion at the end is that Jakie has not forgotten his past and will come to embrace it.

In the film, when Jakie returns for one last time, his father is not dead but dying, and just as the film's momentum has built up to a dramatic realization of his father's occupation born from a sense of genuine responsibility and duty, the father disappoints everybody by telling Jakie he loves and forgives him. Jakie's final song, Kol Nidre, rather than the grand reacceptance of his cultural heritage, is instead presented as a worthless antiquated ritual. The filmmakers deprive the prayer and its context of all its personal, cultural, and spiritual value. As Eric Goldman points out in his essay about the film, "he does return to the synagogue, but not because of some deep commitment. He chants simply because he is made to feel guilty by his mother." (43)

To make matters worse, Jakie immediately goes on to sing another campy blackface song which, although it is about his dear mother, proves that he has learned nothing throughout the entire arc of the story. He was right in choosing Broadway over the synagogue, he was right in choosing to assimilate, and there the film ends.

Both of these films and the story revolve around the question of Jewish identity and American assimilation. Like many Yiddish films such as "East and West," they ask the question, what place do Jews have in this new, modern world? And they all ask it in the same way, by forcing them to choose between their careers, representing secularity and modernity, and their parents, representing authenticity and tradition. Both films treated this element somewhat improperly, resolving all the tension and sacrificing delicious payoff. Ultimately I think Rafaelson did it best: he had the courage to acknowledge the story for what it was,

a tragedy, wherein the choice to modernize causes the father to die of shame, forcing the son to spend the rest of his life with his mother in solemn rectification. It's really quite Oedipal when you think about it. The Cantor's Son comes close. At least here the son chooses tradition over modernity and leaves us with a happy conclusion. But in the Jazz Singer, Jackie is left at the end exactly where he was at the beginning. He abandons his home, dismisses his father's beliefs, and suffers no consequences. Because of a fundamental difference in ideology, the American filmmakers took the original story and retold it in a completely different way, giving it the completely contradictory message in the end. Thus The Jazz Singer ceases to be a Jewish film and becomes nothing more than a film that happens to be about Jews.

WORKS CITED

Raphaelson, Sampson. "The Day of Atonement." Everybody's Magazine 1922.

Goldman, Eric A. "The Jazz Singer and Its Reaction in the Yiddish Cinema." When Joseph Met Molly: A Reader on Yiddish Film. Nottingham: Five Leaves, 1999. Print.



GRAND
LOVES
YOU!

Scherzo

Ben Batchelder 2012

Allegro

tr (scattered)

Piano

x4+? *x3+?* (4)

7

Pno.

(8) (12)

15

Pno.

(16) (20)

23

Pno.

(24) (28)

31

Pno.

(32) *molto rit.*

The Omen · Vol. 38, #4

2

39 **A tempo**

Pno.

(4)

46

rall.

Pno.

52

accel. poco a poco

Pno.

(4) (8)

60

A tempo

Pno.

5 (4)

67

Pno.

73

Pno.

(4) [3] (4)

81

Pno.

3 (8) 3 (12)

88

Pno.

(16) (20)

96

Pno.

(24) 3

103

Pno.

(28) (4)

111

Pno.

(8) 3 (12)

119

Pno.

(16) (20)

126

Pno.

(24) $x1+?$

133

Pno.

(28) (32)

140

Pno.

(36) (40)

147

Pno.

molto rall. *Maestoso, accel. poco a poco*

(44) $x1+?$ (48)

154

Pno.

(52)

161

Pno.

A tempo

(56) $x0+?$ (60)

168

Pno.

175

Pno.

180

Pno.

The Importance of Little League Baseball

by Shea Sweeney

Learning to play baseball is so much more important than learning to write poetry. Understanding the glare of the sun as it is really meant to be understood on sunburnt cheeks and salty lips. Oh honey, you'll learn to write poetry.

Clothing, white pants and baseball caps, should be filthy. The dirty truth, the literal grime of grass stains and the rejection of the washing machine. My God it's fantastic.

They give you your own sweaty mitt and you've got all your friends around you in matching gear and there's Gatorade and oranges waiting for you at the end of an inning and you've etched images of humanity into the dirt with the toe of your cleat while your mama cheers, and you know there's Big League Chew at the concession stand.

That old coach with the thick voice has sweat stains larger than your face and he says, you can smell the flowers another day, today we're playing baseball. You smell the flowers anyway because you can.

But this game, this game, hearts are pounding in skulls out there when a bat sends the ball further than ten feet. You'll learn to recognize the noise of being alive, and baseball will teach you to write without letting you forget what your feet can do. 🧢

Section: Lies

Honey in the Lion

by Charles Haigh

"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges. 14:14)

"It's going to rot off."

"You don't know that. They said there was a good chance it would take this time, but not if you give up."

"A good chance in their eyes would be none at all to anyone else."

"They're the best."

"They were the best at the beginning, too."

"Yes, but that doesn't mean everything else will go wrong too."

"And it doesn't mean it won't."

Her fluttering fingers balled to steel fists, white-knuckled and solid, her eyes shut tight briefly at the heat in his voice.

He turned away, flexing his left hand and looking towards the right. It did not move.

"Richard, I... I," she spluttered, closing her eyes again even more briefly. She was familiar with the gesture, even if she hadn't seen it. "I have to—" He walked out of the room.

Stepping through an oversized window to a stone balcony, he felt rain fall on his left shoulder and head. He usually loved the rain. He continued to flex his left hand, looking at long, deft fingers tracing waves in the air. They were uncalloused and smooth, well but plainly groomed nails cleanly evident at their tips. "My hands" he said quietly but stubbornly. His gaze slipped to the fingers of his limp right hand unhappily. Discolored and slightly bloated, they were no longer elegant, though the yellowed nails were still neatly groomed at their tips. He heaved shallow breaths; head slightly tilted back, water leaking from nape-length gray-flecked tawny hair to dribble on his back. He tilted ovoid glasses to wipe rain from his eyes with a linen sleeve, and turned to look through the still open window. She'd left. He ducked

his head slightly returning to the room and found his eyes on an old photo on the wall directly opposite the window. It was him as a young man, hair darker and longer, his right arm curled under the jaw of a donkey, scratching. He smiled wryly, he considered his time spent as a young man mostly wasted, but he had been very fond of that donkey. The picture reminded him of his arm though, a well turned and glisteningly muscular forearm central to it. He turned away and looked down to his left arm. The heavy musculature of youth had long since left him, remained a much more elegant and dexterous sheet of muscle. He found he preferred it.

Continuing to the immaculate sea-foam bathroom, he looked at his stubble-streaked jaw in the mirror. He had not left the house since Friday and had not shaved since. Tomorrow was Monday, though, and he doubted he'd have the energy to shave in the morning. He stared at the medicine cabinet neatly hung above the porcelain sink and willed it to open. They'd told him to just live normally. How could he do that if he couldn't even open a cabinet? He huffed in annoyance at his own thoughts and reached his left arm across himself to open the cabinet.

On each shelf specific things were arranged for specific purposes. He reached to the lowest and removed a wide-shallow mortar; along with a razor his father had called the "fat-boy". Shaving with one hand was very awkward, but he had grown somewhat accustomed to it, and did so with little event, though marginally slower than would be expected. Carefully wiping down the sides of the basin and cleaning his accoutrements he replaces everything to its appropriate position, nominally adjusting the ivy-toned rug as he leaves.

While without the rain there would still be some crescent of sun hanging on the horizon line he moves to his bedroom, as precisely arranged as the bathroom, the simple act of cutting hair seems to have sapped all of his strength. And like the bathroom, its vibrant riot of color manages to easily break its austere configuration. The floor is covered with a myriad of perfectly rectangular

carpets, all abutting neatly but no two otherwise alike. The neat, even space between the doorway and first carpet reveals the floor to be of a very deep red hardwood, but is otherwise unseen beneath varying depths of silk, wool, and other materials. He recalled that the green star-burst-patterned one in front of him was made of polytrimethylene-terephthalate. He remembered when she brought it home, her first. He carefully stepped over it in entering, as he always had. His large wooden bed was arranged so that its left edge aligned precisely with the right of the door, so that four particular strides found him beside it and as efficiently under the heavy bedding which he would not have placed on it for another month or two, given the choice. He rolled over to face the interior wall, and felt an annoying shape under his side. Feeling for his annoyance with his left hand shows it to be his right arm. That's all it is now, an annoyance. He sighs and looks to the wall, previously alabaster stucco now painted a lurid shade of blue, to "complement the rug". His last thought as he drifted to sleep was how the color might be removed. 🧐

Jonathan Gardner
According to Google Image Results
by Jonathan Gardner



Ladle Rat Rotten Hut

written by Howard L. Chace

submitted by Breton Handy

Wants pawn term dare worsted ladle gull hoe lift wetter murder inner ladle cordage honor itch offer lodge, dock, florist. Disk ladle gull orphan worry Putty ladle rat cluck wetter ladle rat hut, an fur disk raisin pimple colder Ladle Rat Rotten Hut.

Wan moaning Ladle Rat Rotten Hut's murder colder inset.

"Ladle Rat Rotten Hut, heresy ladle basking winsome burden barter an shirker cockles. Tick disk ladle basking tutor cordage offer groin-murder hoe lifts honor udder site offer florist. Shaker lake! Dun stopper laundry wrote! Dun stopper peck floors! Dun daily-doily inner florist, an yonder nor sorghum-stenches, dun stopper torque wet strainers."

"Hoe-cake, murder," resplendent Ladle Rat Rotten Hut, an tickle ladle basking an stuttered oft.

Honor wrote tutor cordage offer groin-murder, Ladle Rat Rotten Hut mitten anomalous woof.

"Wail, wail, wail" set disk wicket woof, "Evanescent Ladle Rat Rotten Hut. Wares are putty ladle gull goring wizard ladle basking?"

"Armor goring tumor groin-murder's," reprisal ladle gull. "Grammar's seeking bet. Armor ticking arson burden barter an shirker cockles."

"O hoe! Heifer gnats woke," setter wicket woof, butter taught tomb shelf, "Oil tickle shirt court tutor cordage offer groin-murder. Oil ketchup wetter letter, an den--O bore!"

Soda wicket woof tucker shirt court, an whinny retched a cordage offer groin-murder, picked inner windrow, an sore debtor pore oil worming worse lion inner bet. Inner flesh, disk abdominal woof lipped honor bet, paunched honor pore oil worming, an garbled erupt. Den disk ratchet ammonol pot honor groin-murder's nut cup an gnat-gun, any curdled ope inner bet.

Inner ladle wile, Ladle Rat Rotten Hut a raft attar cordage, an ranker dough ball. "Comb ink, sweat hard," setter wicket woof, disgracing is verse.

Ladle Rat Rotten Hut entity bet rum, an stud buyer groin-murder's bet.

"O Grammar" crater ladle gull historically, "Water bag icer gut! A nervous sausage bag icel"


"Battered lucky chew whiff, sweat hard," setter bloat-Thursday woof, wetter wicket small honors phase.

O, Grammar, water bag noisel! A nervous sore suture anomalous prognosis!"

"Battered small your whiff, doling," whiskered dole woof, ants mouse worse waddling.

"O Grammar, water bag mouser gut! A nervous sore suture bag mouse!"

Daze worry on-forger-nut ladle gull's lest warts. Oil offer sodden, caking offer carvers an sprinkling otter bet, disk hoard-hoarded woof lipped own pore Ladle Rat Rotten Hut an garbled erupt.

MURAL: Yonder nor sorghum stenches shut ladle gulls stopper torque wet strainers. 

Your Beloved Horoscopes

by Allison McCarthy

Pisces (February 19th--March 20th): Mercury is in ascendance, did you know they moved the entire office supply aisle at Target?

Aries (March 21st--April 19th): If your second sign is Cancer, avoid rugs this week. If not Cancer, you're fine, rugs are go.

Taurus (April 20th--May 20th): Why are there so many classes in FPH? Why not EDH? The natural lighting is just so much better in there.

Gemini (May 21st--June 21st): Stop telling attractive people about your small dogs, try to instead focus on stories of how seductive and brilliant you are. Certainly refrain from re-telling your parents favorite joke of "we have a couple of children including the dogs, guess which ones are housebroken". This is only applicable to me, sorry other Geminis, eat some veggies or something.

Cancer (June 22nd--July 22nd): Mars is rising this month--if you accidentally buy coffee beans but have no grinder, just use a hammer to smash them into grounds.

Leo (July 23rd--August 22nd): Pamela is trying to smell your hair.

Virgo (August 23rd--September 22nd): Cackalacky.

Libra (September 23rd--October 23rd): Go eat some goddamn salad, Jesus.

Scorpio (October 24th--November 21st): Someone should do a survey of populations at different bus stops.

Sagittarius (November 22nd--December 21st): I can start. The stop outside the Hess Express--primarily UMass students, never the same ones, plus me and an elderly man with a pug.

Capricorn (December 22nd--January 19th): But then just up the road, the stop between the Hess Express and Hampshire is like a hidden grotto of crazed geriatrics who shouldn't be on public transportation, plus a few hapless Hampshire kids who I sometimes come close to hitting when I'm driving home from campus (sorry sorry sorry guys).

Aquarius (January 20th--February 18th): Sometimes it is really difficult to write these horoscopes. Even looking at the daily horoscopes on CosmoGirl.com doesn't help, because I just feel like I have to bequeath something more honest than "your special crush is going to make a move on you today!". Sorry, they're probably not. At best, if you're in the APL a lot they might leave a maybe-flattering anonymous message for you?

Ophiuchus (???--???): Sorry sorry sorryyyyyy, still no idea what is up with your sign! You're like the horse one, right? Or the dragon? Um um um, eat some salad?

Section: Hate

RE: The 10 Commandments of Saga by Jonathan "Omen Kid" Gardiner
by Annie Gardiner

Completely unrelated to your article, but why the FUCK did you steal my last name?

Response to "Intent and Culpability" by Jeremy Johnston

This article discusses issues of sexual violence which may be triggering to some folks.

If you do not acknowledge yourself, you do not respect those around you. Please respect those around you. Acknowledging your privilege means acknowledging that, whether you like it or not, you are a political being.

I am white. I identify as a man. I am male-bodied. My family's wealth allows me many privileges. I am able-bodied. I am thin. I speak English. I am in school. I cannot think of other cultural markings, and this is further evidence of my privilege.

I am fucking upset about the rape culture logic spewed in the last issue of The Omen in the article "Intent and Culpability."

Rape culture only exists because it is approachable. It is sinister in its subtlety. It comes in the form of jokes, in the form of slang. It comes in the form of logic, in the form of friendliness. Rape culture is not defined by intent. Rape culture is not defined by those who would intend to rape. Rape is not defined by intent. Rape is not defined by those who would intend to rape.

Rape is a big word. And intent is largely an empty one. We are defined by our actions, by our choices. The choice to call accusations of rape into question is as much a statement about the speaker's political views as it is about their political embodiment, if those two are different. The argument made in the aforementioned article is a belittling argument, one which dismisses the countless survivors who are told relentlessly that their experiences are illegitimate.

I do not mean to speak for survivors. I am speaking as someone who acknowledges the constant challenge facing survivors by those who would question and deny them their right to speak. If I am being problematic with my writing or approach, please tell me.

Why was your article written? Do you honestly believe that there is a serious problem in this country regarding false accusations of sexual violence? If I listed statistics, would they be meaningless to you? Are accounts of sexual violence somehow redundant now? Do you find my response redundant? Do I not "get" it?

I am tired of this fucking bullshit patriarchy. If you have legitimate concerns, speak about them specifically. Please do not spew the logic of rape culture.



STOP COMPARING RAPE TO MURDER ARGGRJSFLKFDJ

by Shawna J. Roberts

There are so many things wrong with your article that I honestly don't know where to start. And seeing as I have a meeting in an hour and a half, I'll try to keep this brief.

First, the act of comparing rape and murder is incredibly problematic, as it assumes that the crimes are substantiated in similar ways and that the crimes should be handled the same way by our laws. It's an ineffective comparison. For one, no one ever talks about how the victim of a murder or attempted murder was dressed like they wanted to be dead.

You also incorrectly define manslaughter as death caused by "gross negligence". Manslaughter is an unlawful killing without premeditation. Death caused by gross negligence definitely falls under the header of manslaughter. As far as I can tell, your definition of 'unwanted sex' or 'raping without knowing it' are actually definition-wise more similar to manslaughter than to murder. The person did not intend to rape anyone, but they did. The point being: THAT IS STILL A CRIME.

And then you make a broad claim about the legal definition of rape. In actuality, legal definitions of rape vary by state, but I have been completely unable to find a definition of rape that includes the clause that there must be premeditation. Your assertion that the perpetrator must have intended to rape someone in order to commit the "crime of rape" is grounded in the legal definition of murder. (And is, therefore, total bullshit.)

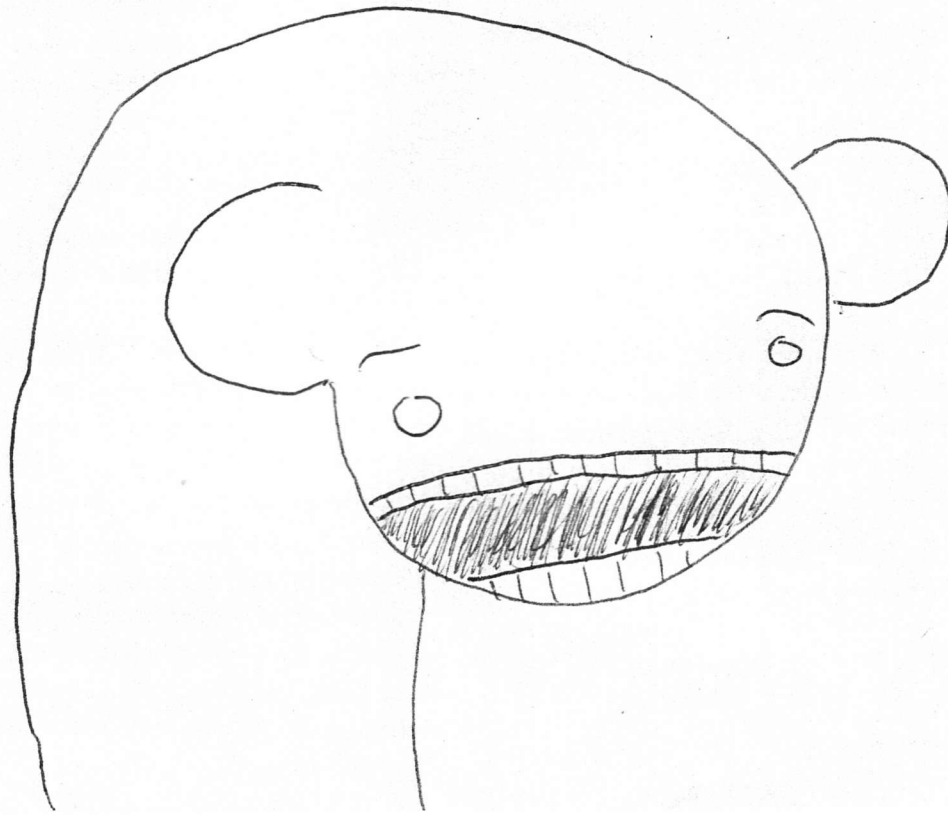
Your next section is completely antagonistic to rape victims and belittles the affect that sexual trauma has on a person. As Jaclyn Friedman has stated on her blog "...it's pretty plain that saying that some rapes count and others don't is what actually trivializes rape."

And finally your insistence that we "promote consent without unduly punishing those who make mistakes in regards to it by convicting them" actually goes directing against the fact that ignorance of the law is not a legal defense for breaking the law. If you do not gain consent before having sex with someone, you have raped them. If you don't understand that or the implications of that, then maybe you shouldn't have sex with other people.

And in the end, all of this boils down to the extremely problematic 'opt-out' program we have applied to sexual consent in this country, which you somehow fail to mention at all. The use of an 'enthusiastic consent' policy actually eliminates the possibility of 'raping without knowing it' because silence is not consent. Enthusiastic consent encourages a continuing conversation between partners regarding what they are and are not comfortable doing. It also means that if a person has not said 'yes', they have not consented.

(Jaclyn Friedman quote taken from <http://yesmeansyesblog.wordpress.com/2011/01/03/the-nonexistent-terrible-horrible-no-good-very-bad-consequences-of-enthusiastic-consent/> I highly encourage you to read this article and pick up the book *Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape*)





Sweatery

ALAN



